

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Work In Progress – Tailored Mental Health and Wellbeing Resource for Engineering and Computing students.

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The mental health (MH) and wellbeing (MW) of higher education students is a subject that has increased in visibility in recent years. Considering the evidence available for students as a population indicates higher risk of poor mental wellbeing, the challenging nature of engineering courses and the majority of the engineering student population being a higher risk group (male, aged 18-25) and the minority population reporting poorer mental health it is important that action is taken to support students who are not seeking help when they need it. The majority (85%) of engineering students in the UK are young adult males (HESA, 2022). Deziel, 2013, Vats and Sharma, 2017, Danowitz & Beddoes, 2018 have all published worrying data showing high rates of mental illness and poor mental wellbeing. It has also been noted that female engineering students report even poorer mental health and wellbeing than their male counterparts (Deziel, 2013, Negi et al., 2019, Jensen & Cross, 2021). A correlation between high levels of anxiety and low academic performance has also been reported among engineering students (Vitasari et al, 2011). While the pump priming project was aimed at engineering students, institutional data has indicated a similar problem in terms of delayed help-seeking in the Computing student population. Given that the disciplines are very similar in approach to problem-solving, and a similar student demographic, it is proposed to develop a pilot for both populations. It is hoped that ultimately the project will support good mental wellbeing among a part of the student community who are at higher risk but less likely to seek help.

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